

U.S. Patent Application No. 09/689,000
Amendment After Final dated 4/14/03
Reply to Office Action of January 15, 2003

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for consideration and acknowledgement of the Information Disclosure Statement and Form-1449 submitted on August 8, 2002.

Claims 7-9, 17-19, and 42-44 are pending, and are in condition for allowance for at least the reasons set forth below.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication in the Office Action that claims 7-9, 17-19, and 42-44 contain allowable subject matter. By way of the foregoing amendments, claims 7, 9, and 42-44 have been amended as set forth below.

Claim 7 has been amended to be in independent form and to incorporate the subject matter of its base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 9 has been amended to be in independent form and to incorporate the subject matter of its base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 42 has been amended to be in independent form and to incorporate the subject matter of its base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 43 has been amended to be in independent form and to incorporate the subject matter of its base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 44 has been amended to be in independent form and to incorporate the subject matter of its base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 7-9, 17-19, and 42-44 are in immediate condition for allowance.

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The Examiner has rejected claims 1-4 and 10-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Mattelmaki (U.S. Patent No. 5,149,448), or Baird et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,470,472), and under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Martensson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,968,372). The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3, 4, and 10-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Larsson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,759,397). The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 12, 13, 16, 20, 21, 36-41, and 45 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by French Patent No. 1,165,054. Claims 1-4 and 10-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph and under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1-6 and 10-16, 20, 21, 36-41, and 45, have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter thereof. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections set forth above are now moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of the present application and timely allowance of the pending claims.

Entry of this amendment is proper under 35 C.F.R. § 1.116 because the amendment: (1) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed here; (2) does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration because the amendments simplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; (3) satisfies a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (4) does not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of filed or rejected claims; (5) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary; (6) places the application in immediate condition for allowance. The amendment is necessary and was not presented earlier because it is

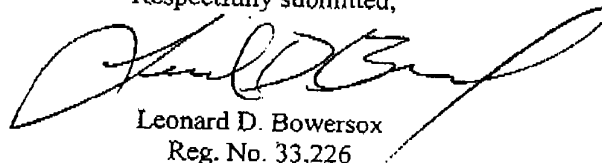
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response to arguments raised in the Final Rejection. Entry of the amendment is thus respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action by applicants or applicants' undersigned representative is desirable and/or necessary, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number set forth below.

Should any fees be necessary in connection with this filing, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0925. Should an extension of time be due, the Commissioner is requested to hereby consider this a Petition and to charge the appropriate extension of time fee to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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